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Arjan Vliegenthart

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discursive and concrete lived relations, sensibility, and cognition. In communicative actions, sensibility and cognition need not be at odds.

Brian Caterino
240 Woodcrest Rd.
Rochester, NY 14616
E-mail: bcaterino@frontiernet.net

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Alternative Economic Models of Transition

John Marangos; London: Ashgate, 2004, 334 pp., \$114.95 (hardback).

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Accepted October 22, 2006

Fifteen years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, some of the economies that have undergone the transformation from a “socialist” economic system to market capitalism stand

out among the fastest-growing countries in the world. China is currently widely regarded as an economic superpower, and among many of the old member states of the European Union, the current economic setup in the Central and East European member states is seen as a template for future reforms in their own countries. For this reason, but also because the economic transformation from a planned economy to a market economy has affected the lives of almost two-fifths of the world population, John Marangos's book *Alternative Economic Models of Transition* deals with an interesting and highly relevant topic.

In contrast to the popular belief that all countries facing such a transformation more or less undergo the same process, there are in fact many, fundamentally different, models of economic transition. The differences between the various models are not well discussed in most of the literature on the process of economic transformation. It is here that Marangos makes an important contribution. Based on an extensive literature review of the most important contributions to this transformation debate, Marangos distinguishes among five models of economic transition. Each model is distinct in the ways in which it deals with the question of privatization, the sequencing of the different steps in the restructuring process, institution building, and social policy. On a more abstract level, the models differ with regard to questions of what makes a good society, with what speed the reforms ought to be conducted, the appropriate political and ideological structures that should underlie the process of changes, and to what extent the existing structures should be taken into account.

The first model Marangos identifies, the "shock therapy model of transition," is based on the conviction that the former planned economies were such a mess that a radical and profound restructuring program was needed. It propagates a rapid introduction of a radical and comprehensive program as this would—according to the advocates of this "harsh medicine" (73)—eventually lead to greater individual freedom and a quick economic recovery. The second model, the "neoclassical gradualist model of transition," claims the same goals as the shock therapy one but advocates to this end "the need to establish economic, institutional, political and ideological structures before any attempt at liberalization was undertaken" (111). Advocates of the "post-Keynesian model," the third model, conversely argue "that the movement towards a market economy required the formation of a hierarchy between coexisting organizational elements, in order to establish social coherence in the economy, in which market relations dominate" (137). It embodies a view different from that of the first two models as to how a good society should be organized. Post-Keynesianism does not favor radical individual freedom and a minimal role of the state but argues instead for a kind of social-democratic capitalist system with "a variety of property forms and a market with state intervention within a democratic political system" (139). Fourth, "pluralist market socialism" advocates the importance of a system that eliminates the unequal division of power—which is seen as a core characteristic of capitalism—and aims to replace this by a higher form of accountability. Finally, supporters of the "non-pluralist model," or the "Chinese model," advocate economic reforms without substantial political reforms, that is, the introduction of a market economy under strict leadership of the state.

After having discussed these different models, Marangos dedicates the final chapter to the question of which model is most optimal in facilitating the economic transition. The author concludes that on the basis of economic, political, ideological, international, financial, and foreign direct investment costs, the neoclassical gradualist model performs best. First, this model entails the least output reduction. Second, governments that pursued a gradualist model won elections; and third, international agents favored this model as well and gave governments that behaved in line with it material and technical support.

Alternative Economic Models of Transition aims to provide an understanding of the transition process “from a new and more enlightened perspective. It provides a better understanding of the complexities involved in the transition process and the differing opinions between economists” (31). Overall, it indeed provides us with a detailed account of the different models that appeared in the transition debate. It deals with these models quite systematically and implicitly compares each model to the others on a variety of issues. Due to its higher level of abstraction, it is able to discuss the question of to what extent these different models are internally coherent.

However, the book is less convincing on other points. A first point of critique concerns the fact that the book lacks an actual research puzzle or question. Whereas it is clear that the general aim of the book is to provide an overview, and to some extent an assessment, of the different models, the reader is left somewhat in the dark as regards the book’s actual objective. Should it be read as an attempt to coherently structure the different theoretical views on how the economic transition should be undertaken? If that is the case, Marangos has done a good job in providing several accounts. But the reader is left with the idea that the book sets out to do something more. Especially the last chapter gives the impression that Marangos wants to go beyond merely describing the different models. And unfortunately, here his argument runs into problems. An effective assessment of the models cannot ignore the way they have turned out in practice. A serious assessment should therefore deal systematically with the questions of where and how the different models have been put into practice and what the actual results have been. This is a rather complicated task that asks for detailed empirical study of how the different economic programs worked out on a society as a whole. This would, for instance, force engaging with the question of which groups won and which groups lost. Economic transition is not a process that has had the same outcomes for all societal groups. Rather, if anything, the economic transition has led to clear winners and losers as inequality in any aspect of life, not only economically, has risen in all transition economies. Marangos’s assessment, however, remains on a rather abstract theoretical level and does not go deeply into such a description.

Of more fundamental concern is the question of whether such a comparison is a fruitful enterprise at all. Marangos’s assessment is based on criteria that he has introduced himself. These criteria as such cover a broad variety of issues, both national and international, but are nevertheless somewhat arbitrary as they neglect the political goals that underlie the different models. The political rationales between the models are so completely different that we end up comparing apples with pears. Does it, for instance, make sense to criticize the pluralist socialist market model on the fact that it calls for a totally different orientation of the population than existed at the start of the transition? Of course, it now seems unrealistic that such a model would have prevailed in any of the transition economies. But can we conclude that in the end, if people had agreed on this model that places social equality and positive freedom at the heart of the transition process in their country, they would have been worse off than had they adopted, for instance, the shock therapy model? The answer to this question depends on the political decision of what kind of society is envisioned and not on criteria that can be objectively discerned.

Overall, Marangos’s book provides a well-informed state of the art on the economic debates that were held in the postsocialist countries during the past fifteen years. It contains useful insights into the different roads that could be taken in the economic transformation toward a market economy. Here, the author demonstrates thorough knowledge of

the different models. However, the way in which he ranks the different models needs more empirical grounding, if at all possible.

Arjan Vliegthart
 Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
 Department of Political Science
 Netherlands
 E-mail: a.vliegthart@fsw.vu.nl

Rebuilding Labor: Organizing and Organizers in the New Union Movement

Ruth Milkman and Kim Voss, eds.; Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004, 320 pp., \$49.95 (hardback), \$19.95 (paperback).

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In *Rebuilding Labor*, leading labor scholars Ruth Milkman and Kim Voss bring together a collection of scholarship on recent efforts to revitalize the U.S. labor movement, which has been in decline for over half a century. The ascension of John Sweeney and the “New Voice” team to the top leadership positions within the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in 1995 sparked widespread hopes that labor’s decline would soon reverse. Under Sweeney’s leadership, the AFL-CIO devoted significant resources to organizing. This book examines some of the Sweeney-era efforts to create a “new union movement.” It consists of nine chapters combining both quantitative and qualitative research.

The book begins with Bronfenbrenner and Hickey’s “Changing to Organize: A National Assessment of Union Strategies,” addressing the question: which organizing strategies will be most effective in reversing the labor movement’s decline? The authors quantitatively assess the organizing records of international unions in the late 1990s, as well as the election and contract outcomes for 412 National Labor Relation Board (NLRB) certification election campaigns held between 1998 and 1999. Their findings reveal that the unions that are most successful engage in fundamentally different organizing campaigns than those that are less successful. The successful campaigns include such things as: (1) adequate staff and financial resources; (2) strategic targeting; (3) active and representative rank-and-file organizing committees; (4) active participation of member volunteer organizers; (5) person-to-person contact inside and outside the workplace; and (6) issues which resonate in the workplace and in the community. Therefore, these authors suggest that unions can increase their organizing success by developing comprehensive, multifaceted, and strategic organizing campaigns.

Sharpe’s “Union Democracy and Successful Campaigns” highlights the endemic tension between leadership authority and worker participation within the context of a Local Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE) campaign in California. Her qualitative evidence suggests that union democracy is most likely to emerge when the leadership has a genuine concern for worker empowerment and leadership development. In “Workers Against Unions,” Penny considers workers’ participation in anti-union campaigns, suggesting that unions, organizers, and workers “would do well to engage with